GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:289
ANSWERED ON:19.02.2003
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF VPTS
V. VETRISELVAN

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have invited tenders for operation and maintenance of existing village public telephones;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the existing companies are not capable of providing telephones in the rural areas of the country on demand;

(d) if so, whether some new companies are likely to be engaged in this work;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the estimated demand of telephone connections in the rural areas of the country at present and the extent to which it has been fulfilled till date?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SMT. SUMITRA MAHAJAN)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) inviting bids for operation and maintenance of existing village public telephones was issued on 29th January, 2003. The sale of tender document has started with effect from 10th February, 2003. The sale of tender document closes on 27th February, 2003 and the last date for submission of pre-qualification and first stage financial bids is 28th Feburary, 2003. The tender document is also available on Department of Telecommunications website www.dotindia.com for information of all interested parties. In this first stage of tendering, bids have been invited from Basic and Cellular service operators of the respective service areas.

(c) to (e) The six private basic service licensees could not provide village public telephones as per their license conditions. Twenty five new licenses have been issued in 18 service areas with an obligation to cover urban, semi-urban and rural short distance charging area in a service area.

(f) The total number of telephone connections and the waiting list in the rural areas as on 31.12.2002 is 1,06,65,581 and 16,27,285 respectively. No waiting list has been reported by the private basic operators.